may not be best begun in consequence of military resistance to the efforts of the administration to sustain troops of the Union, stationed under the authority of the Government, in a fort of the Union, in the ordinary course of service."

That nothing might be wanting to make the precise object of the expedition known to the authorities of South Carolina, a clerk of the State Department was despatched to Governor Pickens, informing him officially that an attempt would be made " to supply Port Sumter with provisions only, and that if such attempt be not resisted, no effort to throw in men, arms, or ammunition" would "be made without further notice, or in case of an attack on the fort."[1] This message was given to the Governor on April 8th.

Mr. Lincoln unquestionably expected that resistance would be made and the fort attacked. And he could hardly have looked for a successful defence. But his object was not a military one, but a purely political one. War was reasonably sure to come sooner or later; but the longer it was deferred, the more would people get accustomed to the idea of a Southern Confederacy,—of a distinct nation in the territory of the old United States. If the independence of the seceding States was not to be tol-

erated, it must not be allowed to continue too long unhindered. For this reason it would not answer to evacuate the remaining military posts without resistance, even if the chances were against a successful defence of them. The effect of this would

[1] I W. R., 291.